

Historians have recently uncovered evidence that hundreds of soldiers of Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) heritage fought on both the Union and Confederate sides of the U.S. Civil War, continuing a long tradition of significant AAPI contributions to the history of the United States since the Colonial Era.

Last night these soldiers were honored by the House of Representatives through a resolution that I sponsored. The passing of [House Resolution 415](#) marked the culmination of my seven-year battle to help correct the historical record and honor the memories of these brave soldiers.

House Resolution 415, co-sponsored by more than 50 legislators from both parties, focuses on the actions of Edward Day Cohota and Joseph L. Pierce, the two most widely documented AAPI Civil War soldiers. Cohota's comrades gave testimony of the seven bullet holes in his coat during the battle of Drury Bluff. Pierce fought at the Battle of Gettysburg, volunteering for a dangerous assault on Bliss Farm, a bloody no-man's land between the Union and Confederate armies. Both men were Union soldiers.

Despite the sacrifice of hundreds of men such as Pierce and Cohota, the bigoted laws of the day denied them the right to naturalize as U.S. Citizens. This resolution was the least that could be done to honor their memory.

The history of America would be totally different without the contributions of Asian Americans. From hard labor building the transcontinental railroad linking our coasts, to the academic contributions ranging from philosophy to medicine, Asian Americans have been an integral part of making our country great.

As a teacher and an educator of more than 30 years, I believe our students should learn about these exploits in their history books; they should learn that from the start our country's history has been rich in diversity. Also it is very important for our community to see their ancestors' contribution acknowledged. I thank groups such as the Chinese American Citizens Alliance and

all my colleagues in Congress who helped me in passing this long overdue resolution.